

# The Negro Struggle

By ALBERT PARKER

## Roosevelt "Promotes" Davis

Two weeks ago in this column we drew attention to the failure of President Roosevelt to promote Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Negro officer, to the rank of brigadier-general, as he did with scores of white colonels at the same time.

In it we declared what everyone acquainted with the situation knew: that the Army is a Jim Crow institution, that it does everything it can to prevent Negroes from becoming officers, and that it sees to it that they don't rise higher than the post of colonel.

Now, however, Roosevelt has promoted Davis to be a brigadier-general, the first such colored officer in the Army's history.

Does this mean that there has been any change in the Army's Jim Crow policies? Does this mean that now there will be equal rights for colored soldiers, that discrimination against them will end, that they will receive a proportionate number of officers' posts?

Look at the facts, and you'll have to answer: No.

In the first place, whatever happened to Davis, the recent ruling of Commander-in-Chief Roosevelt that there shall be Jim Crow regiments still remains in effect. That means that Negro soldiers will not get equal rights, that they will still be used for laborers or suicide squads, suffering all the insults of the Negro-hating officer caste that runs the Army and will continue to run the Army even if Davis is a brigadier-general.

Every anti-Semitic firm, every big business outfit that refuses to hire Jews, usually has one Jew on its office staff, to be pointed to as an example of their unprejudiced hiring policies. This one Jewish employee is used as window-dressing to cover up the rotten general policy.

Davis is going to be used as the window-dressing of the U. S. Army, for a time, to cover up the vicious anti-Negro policies of its general staff.

But even more important than this reason is the fact that election day is almost here.

## A Vote-Catching Move

In the last month Roosevelt has lost considerable votes as the result of his statement on Jim Crow regiments. He has taken a heavy wallop from most of the Negro press on it, and from the N.A.A.C.P. for his attempt to make it seem they had approved this policy.

In many states the colored vote may prove decisive. Consequently, Roosevelt has attempted, by promoting Davis, to repair some of the fences he broke himself.

As proof, we point to the date of the announcement of his promotion: October 25th. This is just in time for the last issue of the Negro weekly papers that will appear on the newsstands before November 5. It thus gives him the final punch in the campaign, in even the papers that oppose him and support Willkie.

The general staff of the Army won't like it, even though they recognize it as a necessary political maneuver that won't change anything fundamentally. But they won't worry too much. For Davis is 63 years old, and will reach his retirement age July 1. So Roosevelt will get his votes when Davis gets his promotion, and a few months later when Davis gets his walking papers, the general staff will get the pleasure of being 100% lily-white again.

Although the appointment of Davis is partially a concession to mass protest, it is primarily a vote-catcher. It is no reason for relaxing the fight, Jim Crowism must still be fought by workers, colored and white, in the armed forces, as well as in civilian life.

## Judas-Goat Dunjee

A "Judas goat" is one of those old, hardened, well-trained animals used in the stockyards to lead the sheep up the incline. When the goat gets to the top, he steps aside, and the sheep keep right on marching until they run into the butchers' knives. Then the goat comes down again, and is used over and over again to lead more unsuspecting sheep to their end.

Roscoe Dunjee, about whom we had a few things to say last week, is the editor of "The Black Dispatch" in Oklahoma. Last week he wrote an article asking that all Negro newspapermen be exempted from conscription. Why? Because they had been very valuable, he said, in getting the Negro people to accept the draft. And if these very valuable newspapermen are drafted, he feels, the newspapers will be weakened, and may not be able to do such a good job in the future.

Roscoe Dunjee is a Judas goat who has led his followers up the incline of the Jim Crow draft. But he doesn't want the same fate as the sheep. He wants to be excused so that he will be safely on hand to lead more sheep to the butchers' knives.

## Forty Dollars A Head

When a colored man is even suspected of killing a white person down South, all resources of the state are used to capture him. Rewards of thousands of dollars are offered, blood-hounds and posse called out, and the victim is given short shrift when he is caught.

But it is different when the victim is a colored man.

In Washington, D. C., capital of the nation and frontier of Jim Crow land, seven Negroes have been fired on by a mysterious white maniac during the past few months. Five were killed and two injured.

Little effort has been made by the police to capture the maniac, who picks only colored victims. A total reward of \$200 has been posted for his capture. That comes to \$40 a head, or, one-twentieth of what a slave was worth 80 years ago.

# Ten Days That Shook The World

## Leon Trotsky, 1879-1940



On this 23rd anniversary of the Russian Revolution, we would also have saluted our Comrade Leon Trotsky on his 61st birthday. The Russian Revolution has been betrayed by Stalin and the life of Trotsky, one of its chief architects, was snuffed out by one of Stalin's assassins. To the living tradition of that revolution and the rich revolutionary heritage of Trotsky we re-dedicate ourselves for today and the future.

By LYDIA BEIDEL

It is twenty-three years since the birth of the USSR, the first proletarian state. And it is twenty years since the death of John Reed, author of one of the finest dramatic records of that birth, *Ten Days That Shook the World*.

The figure of John Reed—adventurer, reporter, dynamic American youth—plays a unique and highly symbolical role in the greatest of all historical crises, the Russian revolution. His rebel spirit, battling about in a struggle against the restraint of tradition in the literary arts, gravitated unerringly toward Russia in 1917, the focal point of revolution against every aspect of the senility of capitalist society. The adventurer in him sensed that here he could be part of the grandest of all human adventures.

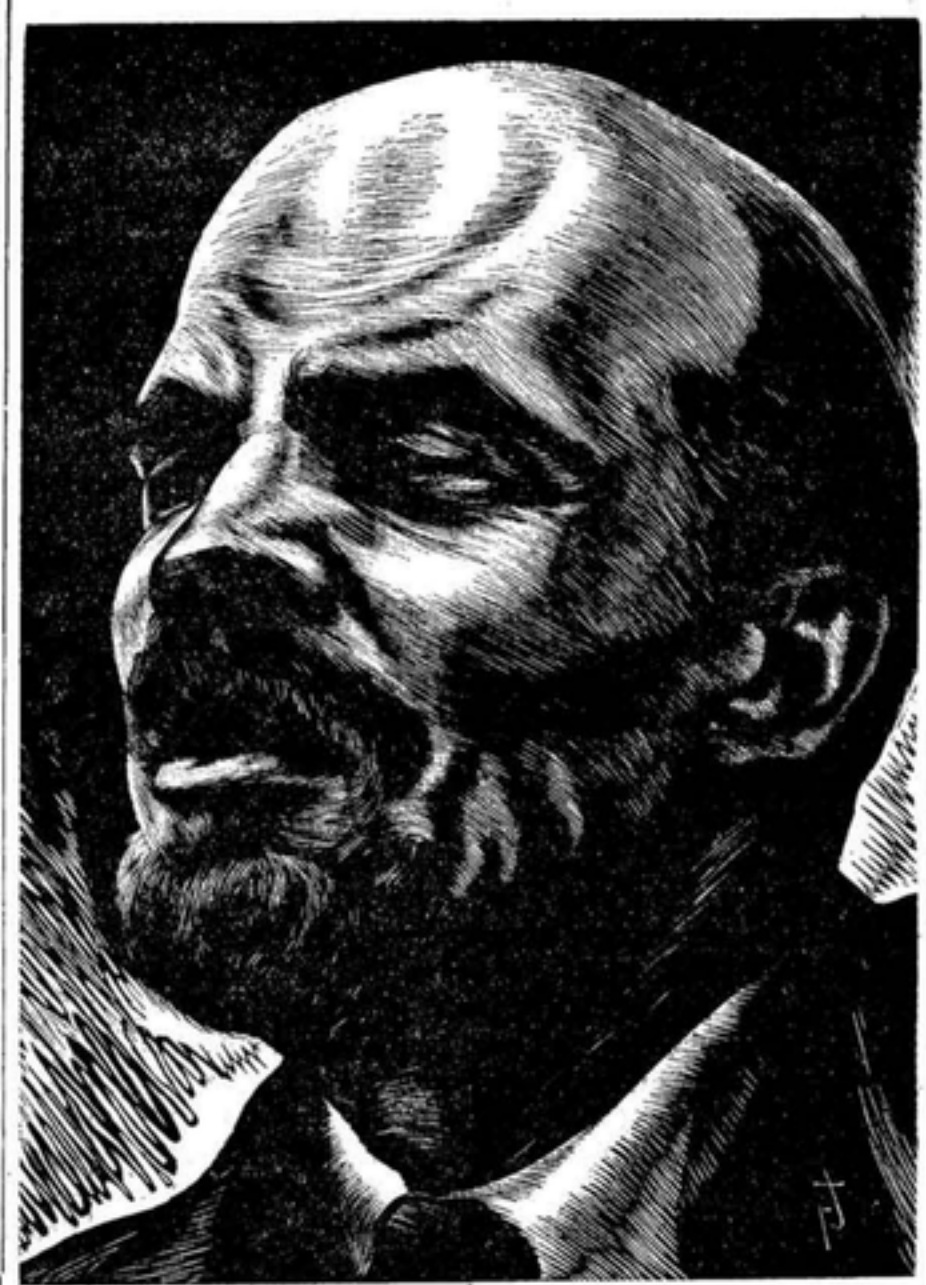
### HE GREW WITH THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

But history, in its moments of creation, distills out of every man the finest in him for the future to cherish. John Reed, adventurer and romanticist though he may have been, could not fail to see that he as an American was not alien in Russia in November, 1917. Hearing and seeing Lenin and Trotsky, he perceived that this upheaval of a decayed society was but the beginning of a universal phenomenon which must remain incomplete until it had run its course and embraced all of mankind. He saw more clearly than many a politician of his day that this was a class and not a national event.

He played his role in the Russian revolution and then, with the simple acceptance of an indisputable fact which characterized all the Russian Bolsheviks, hastened back to the United States in 1919 to carry the revolution beyond the place of its beginning by helping to form a communist party here.

John Reed came to the revolution not as a proletarian politi-

## V. I. Lenin, 1870-1924



cian or theorist but simply as a sensitive, intelligent rebel. Yet he epitomizes some of the finest aspects of our revolution. His audacity is an inspiration to all American youth. His understanding of the worldwide implications of the Russian beginning is a reproach to every Stalinist malingerer from the hand of Lenin, only via editor's notes in the back! Let them explain John Reed's constant coupling of the names of Lenin and Trotsky throughout his book.

### THEY REMEMBER HIS DEATH WE REVIVE HIS WORK

Last week the Stalinists commemorated his death with a meeting. These people are always saffet commemorating deaths. There is no fear that the one whose memory they insult by their vicious perversions of truth may rise up and answer back. Let them try to explain why John Reed neglected to mention even once the name of Stalin!

That of all the figures of those ten days it was Stalin whom they call "the greatest genius of all time," who completely escaped John Reed's attention and record! That the name of the executioner of all the Old Bolsheviks could be smuggled into this great work, with its laudatory introduction from the hand of Lenin, only via editor's notes in the back! Let them explain John Reed's constant coupling of the names of Lenin and Trotsky throughout his book.

How Jack Reed would have despised the Stalinist record of pandering to the most putrid parts of the decayed body of capitalism! How his rebel soul would have shuddered at the sterility which the present-day Soviet bureaucracy tries to pass off as proletarian art! How he would have wept that they could build a physical monument in America to literary boot-licking and the Cossack knout of bureaucratic censorship and call it by his name—the John Reed Clubs! Let them celebrate the death of John Reed. We shall celebrate that part of him which cannot ever die: TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD.

# Lewis Shifts Parties-- But Not Basic Line

Support of Willkie, Like Support of Roosevelt, Is Betrayal of Interests of the American Working Class

By JOSEPH HANSEN

In coming out in support of Wendell Willkie for the presidency of the United States, John L. Lewis did not betray the working class to any greater extent than if he had come out again for Franklin D. Roosevelt as he did in 1932 and in 1936. That is what must be understood clearly first of all.

What is most noteworthy about Lewis' espousal of Willkie's cause is that it is an astonishingly naked display of the absolute bankruptcy of the American trade union bureaucracy before the crucial political problems facing the working class.

What shall the workers do about the war in which the United States will soon become a military participant? Should he support it or struggle against it? How shall he struggle against it? What shall the worker do about the increasing militarization of the United States which has now registered some sixteen million men for induction into the army? How shall the workers secure military training but not at the price of being enslaved by the reactionary officer-caste? How shall the workers win trade union conditions in the armed forces?

Lewis does not even pose these questions. He mentions that Roosevelt's program is bankrupt, that the New Deal failed to solve a single one of the problems from which the country was suffering in 1932. And then Lewis says, "If not Roosevelt, whom do I recommend . . . why, of course, I recommend the election of Wendell L. Willkie . . ." Of course! As if the program of this utilities magnate were something different from Roosevelt's program!

Lewis names them only to betray them. What about unemployment? Are the desperate unemployed, 9,115,000 of them according to Lewis' figures, to continue to march meekly between Republican Hoovervilles and Democrat social investigators forever? "Why, of course," says Lewis, "I recommend the election of Wendell L. Willkie . . ."

And the 45,000,000 people, according to Lewis' figures, who are going hungry in the United States—what should they do? Continue to go hungry under another Wall Street regime, comforted by the thought that they loyally followed Lewis' advice as they did in 1932 and in 1936?

Lewis addresses the Negroes, that is, the Negroes in the Northern States. How his heart bleeds for their votes! He does not even mention the Negroes suffering in the Southern States under the lash of the Bourbon whip. Why didn't he mention them? Because

males" who might question Wall Street's dictatorship.

Lewis discloses his absolute bankruptcy as a labor leader through his failure to draw the necessary conclusions to the following description he makes of the impasse in which capitalism today finds itself:

"The Administration spokesmen forget to say what will happen to economic America when the 25,000,000 men now under arms in foreign nations and the 70,000,000 citizens who service the armies, are returned to peacetime pursuits. The manufacturers of America will then have to compete in the remaining world markets with the quantitative production of foreign nations, whose workmen will occupy the relative economic and social status of chattel slaves.

"Where will our country then sell its goods? Surely not in Europe, nor in the Baltic or Mediterranean areas. Surely not in Africa or the Orient. Surely, it is obvious that South American markets will be penetrated by the cheap labor products of the world commercial adversaries of the United States of America."

### THE WORKERS MUST DRAW THE OBVIOUS CONCLUSION!

Lewis in these words touches upon the insoluble contradiction in which capitalism in its death agony finds itself. He does not elaborate on this theme nor follow it to its inevitable conclusions. To do so would be to expose himself in the eyes of the workers as an agent of the bosses, trying to lead the workers to the polls to vote for their mortal enemy.

The capitalist produces not for use, but only in order to sell and make a profit. If there is no market then the goods pile up in warehouses, the factories close their doors, the workers starve while the capitalists set about to slaughter entire populations, blow up billions of dollars worth of national riches in their fight for markets.

The national wealth flows into the hands of an ever narrowing circle of corporations completely dominated by a handful of capitalists who perform no function in production whatsoever. At the same time the industrial machine becomes so complex, involves such an intricate organization, requires such a vast number of workers for its operation, is so highly productive, that it is completely ripe for the next stage of society's

development, the socialist system of production for use instead of profit.

### DON'T LEWIS SEE THE DANGER OF FASCISM HERE?

Surely it should be obvious to Lewis that Wall Street, in order to compete with the capitalists who are now locked in military conflict for domination of the world market, will attempt to crush the American trade union movement, thus reducing the American workers to the "economic and social status of chattel slaves."

It was this contradiction of capitalism—dynamically expanding productive forces in a narrowing world market, which faced Italian capitalism after the last world war. The capitalists there succeeded in imposing their "solution"—that is, fascism, which started its horrible and bloody task by smashing the labor movement.

It was this contradiction of capitalism which the German imperialists staved off by installing Hitler. They wiped out the last remnants of the labor movement in Germany.

It happened again in Spain. In France and England, the capitalists, faced with this same contradiction, instituted a military form of capitalist dictatorship which regimented the labor movement and took away overnight all the gains which had been made through decades of painful struggle.

Now the labor movement in the United States faces the same terrible and inescapable problem. Yet Lewis demands that labor shut its eyes and vote for one of the two candidates whom Wall Street has set up to act as its executive officer in Washington.

What is involved in the coming period is nothing less than the fate of the entire trade union movement in the United States. American capitalism has reached the cross roads. With the complete failure of the New Deal it now has no alternative but some form of capitalist dictatorship that will stamp out in blood the

last vestige of the rights of labor.

What must be done? What is needed now, is not political cowardice coming out for Willkie or Roosevelt, but courageous and far seeing trade unionists who can stand up and face the issues squarely. What is needed is a new leadership that understands it is either Fascism or Socialism and who will come out militantly and boldly with a real labor program. Anything less than that means the doom of the labor movement in the United States.

Lewis could have done a tremendous service for labor if he had laid a plague on both the rotten and perditionous houses of Wall Street. Lewis could have given a great impetus to the widespread sentiment for an Independent Labor Party if he had come out and said what is obvious: that both Roosevelt and Willkie are riding the armored tank into war, that war under capitalism is inevitable, and that the only thing to do about it is launch the struggle to put a workers' and farmers' government into power in Washington.

The militant trade unionists must begin using the speech of Lewis as a club to smash all the pretensions of the henchmen of Lewis as serious political leaders of the American working class. They must begin organizing an Independent Labor Party with a labor program. They must no longer hope that Lewis or his ilk will do this job for them. We must roll up our sleeves and do the job ourselves.

**HALLOWE'N PARTY**  
at Bronx Branch Headquarters  
November 2nd  
Socialist  
Workers Party  
857 Westchester Avenue  
(Prospect Ave. Station, IRT)  
Games, Refreshments, Prizes  
Admission 20c

# A Union Paper On Military Training

THE NORTHWEST ORGANIZER, weekly organ of the Minneapolis Teamsters Joint Council, published the following story in its Oct. 24 issue in order, it says, "to illustrate the need for adequate military training of workers under the control of the trade union movement." We reprint both the story and the comments of the union paper.

An American non-commissioned officer relates a personal war experience which casts considerable light upon the cheapness which life attains in time of war. During an attack in the Argonne region, about a month before the Armistice, the detachment this officer was in, received orders to take a particular hill, known as No. 252. It appears that this hill was of some importance as an observation point. It lay somewhat to the side but in the general direction of the main line of advance. Had its capture been allowed to wait for the main advance, the artillery would have cleared its fortifications and would have made an attack less hazardous. The orders, however, were clear that Hill No. 252 was to be attacked at once, and was not to wait for the main line. The hill was encircled with heavy shrubbery through which were cut several narrow passages. As small units of men dashed through these passages they were mowed down by planted machine guns. It took many casualties before these death-spouting nests were muzzled by the force of the human bodies which piled up on them. Finally, no more than about fifty men reached half-way up the hill.

There they halted. They were close enough to the enemy to be greeted with liquid fire and hand grenades. To advance further meant certain death, but by this time retreat meant equally certain death, for they would have faced their own artillery which had been advancing in the meantime. It was imperative that a message should be taken to General Headquarters, about a mile behind the line.

During their slow climb to the present position they had dispatched at frequent intervals five different messengers, but as no relief was in sight, it was assumed that they must have perished. The narrator and the lieutenant of the company volunteered to try their luck on getting a message through to headquarters; by one of those rare miracles both men got through exhausted but unhurt.

General Headquarters was housed in a dugout about thirty feet deep. A staff meeting was in progress when the messengers arrived. The narrator recalls particularly vividly the rough brown boards which served as a table around which the officers were seated; the flickering, shadowy light of two small candles; and the tap-tap-tap of water dripping down on the boards; for the scene formed a weird contrast to the fire and din he had just emerged from.

He thought of the contrast as he crouched quietly and unobserved into a corner, leaving his superior officer to recite the plight of the men on Hill No. 252. He remembers wondering whether he was alive or whether he had died that day, as he had seen so many of his comrades die, and was now in some strange world of darkness and ghosts.

He was soon, however, awakened to reality by a lively argument which ensued among the officers. He was particularly impressed by the eloquent, almost tearful, pleas of the Colonel of the regiment who urged a discontinuance of the attack on Hill No. 252. "Do you realize," the Colonel argued, "that it will take 5,000 men to capture that hill?" He emphasized the number to indicate that he regarded the risk grotesquely exorbitant.

The General with whom the final decision rested, did not reply at once. His fingers drummed upon the rough brown boards; the others waited in suspense. Then the General rendered his verdict. In a well composed but determined voice he said, "Well, if it takes five thousand men, what of it? We've got em."

The NORTHWEST ORGANIZER prints this story to illustrate the need for adequate military training of workers UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, the sort of training that can equip workers themselves to command troops. If every worker became expert in the use of all sorts of arms and in the command of troops, you wouldn't see the brutal disregard of the common soldiers as shown in every battle engaging the armies of today, which puts the men and the officers in about the same relation to each other as existed between the slaves and the slave holders of less modern times.

The United States government places army equipment and instruction at the disposal of the employers, so that they may train at Plattsburg to equip themselves to command the workers in soldiers' uniforms, just as they command the workers in their factories.

Is there any good reason why the United States government should not agree to do the same for the union movement.

It is now certain universal military conscription will envelop this country within a few weeks or months. The trade union movement must see to it that when workers are to receive military training, they should receive such training under trade union control. Such a program would place the workers in the position of being fully able to defend their own interests and would be the best guarantee to capitalism against fascism, either the foreign or native brand.

For Military Training of the Workers Under Trade Union Control!